

SENATE FINANCE & CLAIMS

Exhibit No. 2

Date 4-2-11

Bill No. HB 316

House Bill 316

April 2, 2011

Presented by Chas Van Genderen
Senate Finance and Claims Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I am Chas Van Genderen, State Parks Administrator for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). I am here in opposition of House Bill 316.

Montana State Parks gets zero general fund dollars and zero license account dollars that fund the rest of Fish and Game. HB316 redirects state parks program revenues from both the Coal Tax Trust and the Bed Tax into the general fund and will have the result of reducing the maintenance budget of state parks.

When times are tough economically, Montanan's stay closer to home, but they do not stop investing in strong families and their outdoor recreation heritage. That is part of the reason why resident use of state parks is up 78%. Cutting the budget while visitor use is going up does nothing to address the problems Parks is facing.

You have all heard how the state park system is struggling financially. Let's not harm the ability of staff to spray weeds, clean bathrooms, and take care of historic places like Bannack. Let's not harm the places Montanan's love.

Please vote no on HB316.